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Session: Our wetland biodiversity

Integrating indigenous wetland flora into the urban ecosystem
No matter where we are, who we are and the time we lived in, a garden
Represents the relationship between humankind, and nature. It is an expression
Of a particular culture at a particular time. Wetlands have long been valued by
Tangata whenua of the Waikato area and were a major economic and cultural
Resource; they were the productive wild gardens of Haumia. The importance of
Wetlands as part of landscape identity and ecology is magnified when the loss is
So extreme. Once we interacted with these systems as part of our everyday life,
And their significant decline has the potential to reinforce a disconnect with
People and their natural world. The decline of wetlands throughout New Zealand
Requires a new approach to promoting this ecosystem. Environmental education
 Assumes familiarity with the subject, and so we argue that there is an
Opportunity to enhance reconnections with these incredible systems by revaluating
Our approaches to what ‘wetland restoration’ could mean in terms of
Private garden design and implementation. Bringing wetland flora into the urban
Garden matrix allows urban dwellers the opportunity to be closer/ touch/
Commune and familiarise ourselves with these plants. Not only does the plant
Move into the garden but the whole wetland aesthetic becomes familiar. This
Presentation looks at the plant range indigenous to the wetland soils of Hamilton
City and discusses and explores opportunities for it to be integrated into local
Gardens.

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